

We claim:

1. A method for identifying systemic lupus erythematosus in an individual, the method comprising:

quantitating complement C4d associated with platelets obtained from the individual; and

comparing the quantity of complement C4d associated with platelets obtained from the individual with quantities of complement C4d associated with platelets obtained from individuals not having systemic lupus erythematosus;

wherein greater quantities of C4d associated with platelets obtained from the individual as compared to quantities of C4d associated with platelets obtained from individuals not having systemic lupus erythematosus correlates with the presence of systemic lupus erythematosus in the patient.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising quantitating CD42b associated with platelets obtained from the individual.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein quantitation of complement C4d is conducted by a method comprising binding the C4d to a conjugate of an antibody specific for complement C4d with a first labeled moiety and quantitating the first labeled moiety.

4. The method of claim 3, wherein the first labeled moiety is a fluorescent moiety.

5. The method of claim 4, wherein the first fluorescent moiety is quantitated by flow cytometric analysis.

6. The method of claim 3, further comprising binding CD42b to a conjugate of an antibody specific for CD42b with a second labeled moiety that is detectably different from the first labeled moiety, and quantitating the second labeled moiety.

7. The method of claim 6, wherein the second labeled moiety is a fluorescent moiety.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein the second fluorescent moiety is quantitated by flow cytometric analysis.

9. A method of monitoring disease activity of systemic lupus erythematosus in an individual comprising:

quantitating complement C4d associated with platelets obtained from the individual; and

comparing the quantity of complement C4d associated with platelets obtained from the individual with quantities of complement C4d associated with platelets obtained from either the individual at one or more different times or individuals not having systemic lupus erythematosus;

wherein greater quantities of C4d associated with platelets obtained from the individual as compared to quantities of C4d associated with platelets obtained from either the individual at one or more different times or individuals not having systemic lupus erythematosus correlates with the presence of systemic lupus erythematosus in the patient.

10. A method comprising:

quantitating complement C4d associated with platelets obtained from the individual; and

comparing the quantity of complement C4d associated with platelets obtained from the individual with quantities of complement C4d associated with platelets obtained from either the individual at one or more different times or individuals not having systemic lupus erythematosus;

wherein greater quantities of C4d associated with platelets obtained from the individual as compared to quantities of C4d associated with platelets obtained from either the

individual at one or more different times or individuals not having systemic lupus erythematosus correlates with the presence of systemic lupus erythematosus in the patient.

11. A kit for use in identifying systemic lupus erythematosus in an individual, comprising a package containing a conjugate of an antibody specific for complement C4d with a first labeled moiety and instructions relating to use of the conjugate to identify complement C4d associated with platelets.

12. The kit of claim 11, wherein the first labeled moiety is a fluorescent moiety.

13. The kit of claim 11, further comprising a conjugate of an antibody specific for CD42b with a second labeled moiety that is detectably different from the first labeled moiety.

14. The kit of claim 13, wherein the second labeled moiety is a fluorescent moiety.

15. A computer readable medium tangibly embodying executable instructions to perform a method, the method comprising:

receiving data corresponding to a determination of complement component C4d deposited on surfaces of platelets;

retrieving a reference value for complement component C4d deposited on surfaces of platelets of individuals; and

comparing the data with the reference value.

16. A computer readable medium tangibly embodying executable instructions to perform a method for identifying systemic lupus erythematosus in an individual, the method comprising:

quantitating complement C4d associated with platelets obtained from the individual; and

comparing the quantity of complement C4d associated with platelets obtained from the individual with quantities of complement C4d associated with platelets obtained from individuals not having systemic lupus erythematosus;

wherein greater quantities of C4d associated with platelets obtained from the individual as compared to quantities of C4d associated with platelets obtained from individuals not having systemic lupus erythematosus correlates with the presence of systemic lupus erythematosus in the patient.

17. The computer readable medium of claim 16, further comprising executable instructions for quantitating CD42b associated with platelets obtained from the individual.

18. The computer readable medium of claim 16, further comprising executable instructions for conducting a quantitation of complement C4d by binding the C4d to a conjugate of an antibody specific for complement C4d with a first labeled moiety and quantitating the first labeled moiety.

19. The computer readable medium of claim 18, wherein the first labeled moiety is a fluorescent moiety.

20. The computer readable medium of claim 19, wherein the first fluorescent moiety is quantitated by flow cytometric analysis.

21. The computer readable medium of claim 18, further comprising executable instructions for:

binding CD42b to a conjugate of an antibody specific for CD42b with a second labeled moiety that is detectably different from the first labeled moiety; and quantitating the second labeled moiety.

22. The computer readable medium of claim 21, wherein the second labeled moiety is a fluorescent moiety.

23. The computer readable medium of claim 22, wherein the second fluorescent moiety is quantitated by flow cytometric analysis.

24. A computer readable medium tangibly embodying executable instructions to perform a method for monitoring disease activity of systemic lupus erythematosus in an individual, the method comprising:

quantitating complement C4d associated with platelets obtained from the individual; and

comparing the quantity of complement C4d associated with platelets obtained from the individual with quantities of complement C4d associated with platelets obtained from either the individual at one or more different times or individuals not having systemic lupus erythematosus;

wherein greater quantities of C4d associated with platelets obtained from the individual as compared to quantities of C4d associated with platelets obtained from either the individual at one or more different times or individuals not having systemic lupus erythematosus correlates with the presence of systemic lupus erythematosus in the patient.

25. A computer readable medium tangibly embodying executable instructions to perform a method, the method comprising:

quantitating complement C4d associated with platelets obtained from the individual; and

comparing the quantity of complement C4d associated with platelets obtained from the individual with quantities of complement C4d associated with platelets obtained from either the individual at one or more different times or individuals not having systemic lupus erythematosus;

wherein greater quantities of C4d associated with platelets obtained from the individual as compared to quantities of C4d associated with platelets obtained from either the

individual at one or more different times or individuals not having systemic lupus erythematosus correlates with the presence of systemic lupus erythematosus in the patient.